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# Labour Market News

CENTRAL ALBERTA

Alberta Employment and Immigration

*Scott McLean sells Toshiba office equipment and he loves his job.*

JOB SEEKERS

## Technical sales reps

### Motivated to sell

Scott McLean doesn't own his own business, but he is his own boss. For the past 10 years, McLean has worked as a technical sales representative for Toshiba Business Solutions in Red Deer, selling multi-functional office equipment to customers across Central Alberta.

Most of his day is spent out of the office visiting customers. It's a job that requires a lot of self-motivation and discipline.

"You definitely have a lot of personal responsibility. You're not micro-managed. You're given a quota and given the tools, shown how to sell products and the rest is up to you to produce," says McLean.

### The job

Technical sales reps go by a variety of different titles, such as account representative, account executive, sales broker, outsides sales representative or field sales representative.

They sell technical goods and services such as computer and office equipment, oilfield equipment, machinery and even pharmaceuticals. Most employers seek technical sales reps who have several years experience working with the type of products they are selling. They may also require a post-secondary diploma or degree and previous sales experience.

*Continued on page 2*

EMPLOYERS

## Drug and alcohol testing in the workplace

In recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on workplace safety. At many workplaces, especially in the oil and gas, construction, manufacturing and forestry sectors, safety certification, regular safety meetings and ongoing safety training are becoming industry standard.

Another safety tool many employers are turning to is drug and alcohol testing. They are concerned that impaired workers may be putting themselves, and others, at risk.

For employers who are new to the process, it can seem a complex and confusing task. In Alberta, there is no specific legislation regulating drug and alcohol testing in the workplace.

"On one hand, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* holds employers responsible for ensuring that their workplaces are safe," says Lloyd Dick, with the Construction Owners Association of Alberta (COAA). On the other hand, drug and alcohol dependencies are recognized as disabilities under Alberta human rights law, and employees with addictions are entitled to human rights protection.

As workers file complaints and take employers to court over the issue, case law continues to evolve and new legal boundaries are constantly being established.

"The law in Alberta still remains unclear with respect to drug testing," notes Janice Ashcroft, legal counsel for the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission. "If an employer is going to set up a drug and alcohol program, they need to consider the human rights implications and consider, on a case-by-case basis, how the commission might view them. A balance must be had with respect to safety and the protection of employee rights."

### Getting started

It is generally accepted that in order to test employees for drugs or alcohol, the employee must work in a "safety-sensitive" position where impairment on the job could harm the employee, their co-workers or the public.

*Continued on page 8*

*See page 7 for a related Best Practice story.*

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NEXT ISSUE...

**Jobs in oil and gas servicing**

JOB SEEKER FEATURE STORY

# Reach new territory with a career in sales

*Continued from page 1*

"In technical sales, you need to know the product that you're selling and you need to be able to identify and implement it into specific applications for your customers. You can't do the job unless you know your product," notes Scott Vuylsteke, a technical sales rep for PSI Fluid Power in Red Deer. He sells hydraulic equipment to customers across the central region. He started in shipping and receiving, learning about the products before going into sales five years ago.

Some employers have entry-level positions and will provide in-house training to teach new technical sales reps about their products, but in this case they usually prefer some past sales experience, even if it's in a retail environment.

A positive attitude is also important to succeed in technical sales.

"There's stuff that you can teach people and then there's stuff that they have to bring to the table, like enthusiasm, people skills and customer service," says McLean.

## On the move

People who work as technical sales reps can expect to spend most of their work day travelling town to town to see clients, showing products and teaching customers how to operate new equipment or machinery. "If you're busy, you shouldn't be doing a lot of work in the office. You should really spend 80 per cent of your time in the field," says McLean.

Technical sales reps are given sales territories, which often cover large geographic areas. Vuylsteke, for example, drives about 4,000 kilometres a month, visiting about five to eight customers each day. He is able to come home most nights, but many technical sales reps may spend a week or two each month on the road.

## Prospecting

Not only do they visit existing clients, they must make cold calls—over the phone or in person—to solicit new business. "Prospecting is a big part of the job and that includes cold calling, where you show up without an appointment with your business card and you ask to talk to whoever handles the office equipment, looking for leads," says McLean.

Bart Klein, a technical sales rep with Vermeer Canada (see profile on page 4), sells industrial equipment such as horizontal drills and wood chippers. His territory stretches across Northern Alberta, and like McLean most of his day is spent out of the office.

"When I leave home in the morning I go straight to visit customers. I do customer calls and customer follow-ups on previously sold equipment. I go out and knock on doors looking for new customers," says Klein. "When I'm sitting in a hotel room at night in different towns, I just grab the yellow pages, looking for new contacts."

*Scott Vuylsteke spends much of his day calling customers on the phone. A technical sales rep, he drives an average of 4,000 kilometres a month meeting clients across Central Alberta.*

The job requires good negotiating and communication skills and a thick skin to handle rejection.

## Pressure with pay-off

Technical sales reps are under constant pressure to maintain and expand their client base. It can be a challenge, especially for new sales reps who are trying to build up a customer base. Employers usually set sales goals or quotas, which often increase with experience. But the pay off can be very lucrative for sales reps who meet targets.

"There's no ceiling, the sky's the limit. Whatever you put into it is what you get out of it," says McLean.

Reps are usually paid a commission, or a base salary with commission. They sometimes earn bonuses and other incentives, and company benefits are often provided. The 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey found that technical sales reps earned an average of $29.61 per hour.

## Job opportunities

Despite the great earnings potential, many employers are having a hard time recruiting technical sales reps. Pentagon Farm Centre in Lacombe says it's been a struggle for the company to find technical sales staff.

Recruiting sales staff has also been a challenge for Toshiba in Red Deer. "It's hard to find sales reps because there's so many other jobs out there," says McLean.

## Advancement

Depending on the size of the company and an employee's sales abilities, there are often opportunities to move up into senior sales positions and management.

# Selling goods and services
## Sales and marketing jobs

Careers TO CONSIDER

*Besides technical sales representative (featured on pages 1 and 2) there are plenty of other career opportunities thoughout the region for people interested in sales. There are many entry-level positions available in retail sales, with room to advance up the career ladder into positions requiring more experience and education.*

### RETAIL SALESPERSON (NOC 6421)

Retail salespersons sell or rent goods and services to customers in a wide variety of stores and other retail businesses. They assist customers with the selection and purchase of merchandise, everything from books and food to clothing, appliances, stereos and automobiles. They could work in smaller specialty shops, in shopping malls or large department stores. Stores often have entry-level positions and provide on-the-job training. Retail salespersons should be familiar with the products in their store so they can help customers find items that suit their needs. They may be required to solicit new business when they are not serving customers. Retail salespersons often work part-time shifts and may have to work evenings, weekends or holidays. They should be neat and well-groomed in appearance. They must also be able to work under pressure and and be courteous, patient and tactful when dealing with difficult customers. They usually earn an hourly wage, or a wage plus commission.

**Also Known As:** Other job titles for retail salesperson include customer service representative, product demonstrator, sales clerk, salesperson and store clerk.

### SALES REPRESENTATIVE (WHOLESALE, NONTECHNICAL) (NOC 6411)

Wholesale, nontechnical sales representatives sell their organizations' nontechnical goods and services to retail, commercial, industrial and professional clients. They sell a huge variety of products, everything from food and beverages to grocery stores and restaurants, to freight and shipping services to manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors. In general, they phone or visit clients to find out what their needs are and to demonstrate how their product lines can meet those needs. They often approach new clients to solicit business. They estimate or quote prices, credit terms, warranties, delivery dates and prepare sales proposals. Wholesale, nontechnical sales representatives often work long, irregular hours and may spend much of their work day travelling. Employers prefer to hire people with related experience or a post-secondary diploma or degree. Some large organizations may provide on-the-job training for new sales reps. They are usually paid on commission, or a base salary plus commission.

**Also Known As:** Other job titles for sales representative (wholesale, nontechnical) include account manager, broker, manufacturer's sales representative, sales broker and salesperson.

### MARKETING MANAGER (NOC 0611)

Marketing managers plan, organize, co-ordinate and control the activities of organizations or departments within organizations involved in marketing products or services. They may be responsible for sales, sales forecasting and strategic planning, advertising and promotion and market research. Other job duties could include product development, pricing, budget planning, purchasing and customer service. They work in an office environment but are often required to work more than the standard 40 hours a week. Some travel, including national or international travel, may be required. Most employers prefer marketing managers who have several years related experience and a business-related post-secondary diploma or degree. Red Deer College (www.rdc.ab.ca) offers a two-year Business Administration program with a specialization in marketing. Marketing managers are usually paid a salary, which can vary based on the size of the company they work for and the scope of their responsibilities.

**Also Known As:** Other job titles for marketing managers include advertising manager, community relations specialist, product/brand manager and sales manager.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A ...

# Technical sales representative

*Vermeer sales rep Bart Klein.*

**How did you start in this career?**

I started out at a John Deere dealership, working in the back washing tractors and doing oil changes. I moved up into the parts department for 12 years and then moved into sales, selling farm equipment for eight years. Two years ago, I moved over to industrial equipment sales at Vermeer.

**What do you enjoy about your job?**

I enjoy the travel and working with the customers to get them the best products for their needs. The pay is very good and it's satisfying to work with new customers and build a relationship, to the point where you end up selling them a product.

**Does your job affect your lifestyle?**

I spend probably 95 per cent of my work week on the road. My territory is northeastern Alberta from Ponoka straight north on Highway 2 to the Northwest Territories, and from Ponoka east to the Saskatchewan border. I'm probably six to 10 nights a month away from home. My wife is used to me being away from home, although my two young boys sometimes find it hard.

**What are some of the challenges of your job?**

There's a lot of cold calling to find new customers, and repeat calls to existing customers. You need to be able to handle a lot of rejection. When you're super busy and have a very good month, you have to be disciplined enough to stash some money away in your savings account for the months that aren't so prosperous. It can also be challenging if you sell a product to somebody and it breaks down just after they get it.

**Who is suited to this career?**

In the types of sales we do, you have to be self-disciplined and you have to be motivated, because you don't have a boss watching over you. If you're not motivated to get out and make the calls and try and make the sales, you're not going to have much of a paycheque at the end of the month, because we work completely on commission. If we don't sell anything, we're not making any money.

**What are your future career goals?**

Eventually I'd like to get into sales management and get off the road, because I put on 9,000 to 10,000 kilometres a month. Someday it would be nice to not sit behind the wheel so much.

**What advice would you give to someone looking at this career?**

Work hard and enjoy it and success will come to you. It's pretty hard to get up in the morning if you don't like your job and if you're not liking what you're doing—the driving and being away from home. You have to believe in the product you're selling.

CAREER PROFILE

## Bart Klein

Klein is a technical sales rep for Vermeer Canada, selling industrial equipment such as horizontal drills, trenching equipment, wood chippers and grinders and mulching machines. He lives in Wetaskiwin but his job takes him across northeastern Alberta. Most of his day is spent on the road, calling on existing and potential customers. "You're your own boss. You set your own destiny. If you want to work hard and be disciplined and diligent to your customers, you can reap the benefits, you can make very good money and you're not in an office with someone watching over your shoulder." The job requires expert knowledge of the products. "Probably the biggest skill you need to have is knowing the industry and knowing the product."

## Working as a TECHNICAL SALES REPRESENATIVE (NOC 6221)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Wages** | According to the 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, technical sales representatives earned an average wage of $29.61 per hour, and an average annual salary of $62,169. Most technical sales reps work on commission. Some earn a base salary, plus a commission and/or bonuses. "If you work hard and are disciplined and diligent with your customers, you can reap the benefits. You can make very good money," says Klein. |
| **Qualifications** | Most employers look for technical sales reps with technical qualifications and experience working with the type of product they sell. They may want technical sales reps to have a diploma or degree in areas such as business or marketing, or a field relevant to the product they are selling. Employers may also provide product-specific in-house training. |
| **Hiring tips** | Check the career section or help wanted sections of local newspapers. Online job boards are also a good source. Try the Canada-Alberta Job Bank (www.jobbank.gc.ca), www.salesrep.ca, www.monster.ca or www.workopolis.com. |

# Criminal **records ...**

JOB SEARCH TIPS **work it out**

## Don't let your past limit your future career goals

A criminal record from your past doesn't have to stop you from reaching your employment goals for the future. Depending on the job, many local employers are willing to hire job seekers who have criminal convictions.

"Give employers more credit than what you might think," suggests Ken Hoskin, executive director of Employment Placement Support Services (EPSS), a Red Deer agency that matches job seekers with businesses who are hiring. "Most employers really are more understanding than you think, especially in today's job market."

Over the past five years, about 260 of the agency's clients (about 17 per cent of its total clientele) disclosed that they have a criminal record, for crimes such as theft, fraud, impaired driving and possession of illegal substances. Hoskin says of those 260 clients, 78 per cent were offered jobs and kept them for at least six months.

### Honesty is the best policy

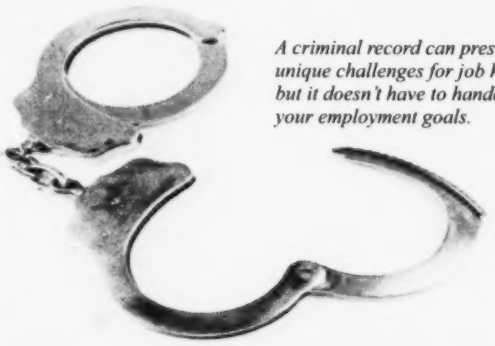
On job application forms and in job interviews, employers can ask candidates if they have criminal charges or convictions for which they have not been pardoned. Some employers also require criminal record checks, especially for jobs where children or other vulnerable people could be put at risk.

Hoskin encourages jobs seekers with criminal records to tell employers the truth about their past, especially if the conviction was recent. If you don't tell the employer and they find out, you may lose your job. "A lot of employers respect people being upfront and honest and they're willing to look past somebody's mistake," he says.

Still, it's a good idea to wait until you get an interview before bringing up your record. If questions about a criminal record are asked on an application form, one option is to fill out your name and contact information and attach your resumé. You could also fill out the application but leave the criminal record question blank, with plans to talk about it in the interview. Make sure you're prepared for the interview. Rehearse what you want to say until you feel comfortable talking about it, says Hoskin. You want to put the employer's mind at ease and assure them you are making efforts to change, he says. Bring a list of references or letters of support from a counsellor, past employer or spiritual leader to the interview.

### Choosing a career direction

It's a good idea to avoid looking for jobs where your record would be a negative. For example, says Hoskin, it may be an issue if you apply to work as a cashier and your record is for theft. Applying for jobs unrelated to your record will improve your chances of getting hired.



*A criminal record can present unique challenges for job hunters, but it doesn't have to handcuff your employment goals.*

### Upgrade your skills

Your record may not be the only obstacle keeping you from a great job. To improve the chances of finding employment, you may want to look into finishing your schooling, if needed, or upgrading your skills. Start by visiting your local Labour Market Information Centre (see list of locations on page 9) and talk to an employment counsellor about different options.

### Applying for a pardon

Hoskin also highly recommends applying for a pardon from the National Parole Board (www.npb-cnlc.gc.ca/infocntr/factsh/pardon.htm). You are eligible to apply for a pardon:

- ☑ after three years for summary convictions
- ☑ after five years for indictable offences.

The Pardon Application and Pardon Application Guide are available online (www.npb-cnlc.gc.ca/pardons/pdf/pardoninstr_e.pdf) or at your local RCMP detachment.

The process usually takes 12 to 18 months, depending on the offence and the documentation required. Some people may find it difficult to wade through all the paperwork. Outside agencies can be hired to do the work for you, which usually costs around $600 and up. If you do the work on your own, the cost of fees is usually around $100.

A pardon is not automatic. If you are granted a pardon, your record (except for certain sexual offences) will be removed from the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) database.

## Coming events in Central Alberta

**EMPLOYER SYMPOSIUM: DIVINE SECRETS OF THE GENERATION GAP!**

Explore how the generation gap has changed workplace dynamics and what strategies to use to overcome potential challenges. *When:* Jan. 26, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (lunch included) *Where:* North Hill Inn *Who:* Guest speakers Barbara Jaworski and Kristen Cumming. Call 403-340-4342 for details or to register.

**MOBILE JOB FAIR FOR OIL AND GAS CAREERS**

Red Deer's Career Assistance Network is holding a Mobile Job Fair in January focusing on careers in the oil and gas industry. The fair will include job site tours of various employers and the opportunity to talk with employers about job opportunities. Free bussing will be available. For more information, call 403-341-7811.

# JobBank

CANADA-JOBS ALBERTA

## 10 TOP JOBS

Jobs posted October 1 to 31, 2008, Red Deer Region

Red Deer Region includes Carstairs, Didsbury, Olds, Innisfail, Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Stettler, Wetaskiwin, Ponoka, Lacombe, Rocky Mountain House, Caroline and Rimbey as well as rural areas and smaller towns around those.

| Occupation Title and NOC Code | Number of Vacancies | Average Wage |
|---|---|---|
| **Total job ads in October** | **1,872** | **$15.47** |
| Welders and Related Machine Operators (7265) | 112 | $19.11 |
| Light Duty Cleaners (6661) | 84 | $11.77 |
| Retail Salespersons and Sales Clerks (6421) | 84 | $12.29 |
| Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Occupations (6641) | 82 | $10.83 |
| Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers (7611) | 77 | $18.40 |
| Truck Drivers (7411) | 67 | $24.89 |
| Labourers in Food, Beverage and Tobacco Processing (9617) | 65 | $12.42 |
| Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanics (7312) | 56 | $32.08 |
| Food and Beverage Servers (6453) | 49 | $10.22 |
| Material Handler (7452) | 47 | N/A |

Source: Service Canada, Canada-Alberta Job Order Bank Services
N/A (Not available) means five or fewer companies posted wages for this occupation.

**FEATURED JOB**

## Light Duty Cleaners (NOC 6661)

Light duty cleaners, also called room or housekeeping attendants, work in hotels, hospitals, offices and other establishments keeping rooms clean and well stocked. The job involves activities like sweeping, mopping, vacuuming, dusting, folding linens, making beds and other general cleaning or organizing duties.

In October, employers advertised 84 jobs for light duty cleaners across the Central Alberta region. The average wage was $11.77 per hour. There are no specific education requirements to work as a light duty cleaner. Training is generally on the job, although the Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association offers certification. Employers may ask job applicants for character references.

With experience, room/housekeeping attendants can move into other jobs in the tourism industry or advance to executive housekeeper positions.

In Alberta, over 80 per cent of people employed in this classification work in administrative, management and other support services; accommodation and food services and health care and social assistance.

# How to use the JobBank

**JOB SEEKERS**

Internet job boards like the Job Bank (www.jobbank.gc.ca) are powerful tools. With a few clicks, a job hunter can search any region of Canada for a particular job category, and even search for employers who've posted ads in the past. Job Bank also has advice on writing a resumé, tips for the job search, advice for finding unadvertised positions, information on self-employment, and notes on finding work in non-profit organizations. With computers and the Internet, job hunters can even automate parts of their job hunt.

With **Job Alert**, any job that matches one of three possible profiles will be automatically emailed to users.

**Job Match** allows a user to create profiles that will be automatically shown to employers searching for new workers

See page 9 for other job boards and more resources for employees.

### Meet employers in person: Connections

Once a week Red Deer's Labour Market Information Centre hosts Employer Connections where a single employer is available to sit down and explain their labour needs. It's an opportunity for job seekers to speak directly with the people who can best explain a job and a career.

Find out about upcoming Employer Connections at employment.alberta.ca/central where there are links to two-page summaries of employers' presentations. This website also has useful information on upcoming job fairs and events, links to previous editions of the Labour Market News, and links to Finding Work In ..., a monthly publication giving practical advice about finding work in different industries.

**EMPLOYERS**

For employers, the Job Bank offers a simple and free way of posting job ads right across the country, while the website's **Job Match** function allows employers to immediately search a database of resumés. The site also has hundreds of well organized links and articles that explain every stage in the hiring process. To post a job ad visit www.jobbank.gc.ca.

### Top 10 career employment ads by industry (Red Deer Region, October 1-31, 2008)

| | |
|---|---|
| Accommodation and food NAICS 72 | 306 |
| Manufacturing NAICS 31-33 | 279 |
| Administration NAICS 56 | 259 |
| Retail NAICS 44-45 | 209 |
| Mining, oil and gas NAICS 21 | 196 |
| Construction NAICS 23 | 142 |
| Logistics NAICS 48-49 | 119 |
| Other services NAICS 81 | 78 |
| Agriculture NAICS 11 | 74 |
| Professional NAICS 54 | 56 |

# Workplace Drug testing

## GasFrac Energy Services puts safety first

Best Practice FOR EMPLOYERS

For GasFrac Energy Services Inc., creating a strong safety culture is a top priority. The company, founded in 2006, provides fracturing services to the oil and gas industry. The work can be dangerous, so when the company started up field operations last January, all field personnel were required to undergo pre-employment drug and alcohol testing.

### A higher standard

"If we have impairment issues on site we have an extreme risk to everybody on site, including the person who is impaired. We won't allow that," says Mike Langill, GasFrac's quality, health, safety and environment manager. "By having this kind of program in place, it sends a message that our employees will be held to a high standard."

Pre-employment drug and alcohol testing has become standard in the oil and gas industry, so prospective employees have come to expect it, notes Langill. Common drugs that GasFrac candidates are screened for include marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, methamphetamines, opiates and phencyclidine (PCP).

"But that doesn't mean candidates are going to come here clean. The last company I was with, we tested 24 people over two weeks and only two of them didn't test positive," he says.

In addition to pre-employment testing, GasFrac has also implemented reasonable cause and post-incident testing. Reasonable cause testing is done if there are reasonable grounds to believe an employee is impaired at work—for example, if they smell of alcohol, are slurring or behaving unusually. Post-incident testing is done if an employee has an accident or injury at work.

Langill says copies of the company's drug and alcohol policy are distributed to staff so they know what is expected of them—that they must come to work sober and fit for duty. It also includes information on where they can get help if they need it. "The employees that we have here, they're all for it. They like to know that the company is designing policies, procedures and programs that are in their best interest and are going to protect them," says Langill.

Staff, especially those in safety-sensitive positions, are educated about the dangers of working impaired, through safety videos and regular discussions at safety meetings. "Because of our stringent policies, we don't have alcohol and drug issues. It's very rare," says Langill.

*Oil and gas work sites can be dangerous if workers are impaired. Many servicing companies, including GasFrac, have developed drug and alcohol testing policies to ensure work site safety.*

If an employee does test positive, the drug and alcohol policy clearly lays out the procedures to be followed. Under human rights legislation, employers are obligated to accommodate an employee if they admit to having a drug or alcohol dependency.

Langill says GasFrac values its employees and will do what it can to assist them if they have a problem.

"We are one big family unit here. Just like any family, if somebody is having a problem we want to work together and get them healthy," he says.

### Getting started

To develop its policy, GasFrac utilized a number of resources, including Enform's Alcohol and Drug Policy Model for the Canadian Upstream Petroleum Industry (www.enform.ca/index.php?id=1011). Management consulted with an outside resource company that specializes in developing drug and alcohol policies and procedures. Langill also suggests consulting a lawyer to make sure all legalities are covered.

## 'CREATING HEALTHIER DYNAMICS IN THE WORKPLACE'

For many employers, employee drug and alcohol testing can be an effective way to ensure safe work environments.

But there are other benefits as well.

"I like to think it's creating healthier dynamics in the workplace," says Jan Chandler, president of Chandler Consulting in Red Deer.

The consulting firm helps companies develop drug and alcohol policies. It also does the actual testing and has counsellors on staff to help with rehabilitation. Chandler has worked with companies who have as few as five employees, or up to 200.

"Of course there's often some negativity in terms of program start up from employees and maybe even management, but I see a lot of good coming out of having a proper program in place," says Chandler. "A lot of people are quitting using drugs in order to keep or get a job. Also, now there is a structure in place to help troubled employees, that never was there before."

Most employers are committed to helping employees if a drug or alcohol dependency is disclosed, she says.

"What I see is a lot of employers standing behind employees who are in trouble and really supporting them ... getting them clean and sober and back to work as soon as possible," says Chandler.

EMPLOYERS

# Drug and alcohol testing

*Continued from page 1*

A general concern for workplace safety isn't reason enough to test—there must be a real and significant safety concern in order for drug or alcohol testing to be considered reasonable and justifiable. If an employer determines they have workers in safety-sensitive positions and they want to go ahead with testing, the next step is to develop a drug and alcohol policy.

"I think in this day and age it's important to have a policy and I think most of the larger contractors and owners have policies in place," says Dick.

Employers will have to decide what type of testing to do—pre-employment, random, post-incident, reasonable cause and site-access testing are some options to consider, each with their own legal implications. Besides testing, the policy should look at ways to educate workers about the dangers of being impaired at work and should provide information on how employees can get help if they have an addiction.

The policy should clearly lay out the employer's expectations regarding drug and alcohol use and what will happen if a worker tests positive. Employers should make sure the policy is clearly communicated to employees and that supervisors understand the policy.

## Employer obligations

If a test is positive, employers must take reasonable steps to determine whether the employee has a dependency (recreational use is not considered a dependency). If the employee does have a dependency, the employer is obligated to accommodate the worker, just like any other worker with a disability. "That accommodation may include giving them leave from work to seek assessment and treatment, allowing them to return to work after treatment and in some cases an employer may have to accommodate some lateness and absenteeism during and following treatment," says Ashcroft.

Employers must accommodate an employee to the point of undue hardship.

## Resources

COAA and Enform, which represents the upstream oil and gas industry, have developed well-recognized drug and alcohol testing models that employers can use as a guideline in developing their own policies.

"For us it's been extremely challenging and confusing. One of the reasons we did the model was to try and reduce some of that confusion and give some guidance," says Dick. Trade organizations may also have resources available for members.

Ashcroft recommends employers with questions contact an employment lawyer, or the commission, for information.

Many third party administrators—the companies that do the actual testing—can also help employers develop policies to suit their needs.

**FOR A BEST PRACTICE STORY ON A RED DEER COMPANY THAT HAS DEVELOPED A DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAM, SEE PAGE 7**

EMPLOYER

# Resources

**Both federal and provincial governments have practical programs to help meet the current need for workers in this tight labour market. Here are a few programs that can be of assistance to business.**

### Information sources

The Labour Market Information page on the Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) website offers links to labour force statistics, forecasts, and wage and salary information. (employment.alberta.ca/lmi)

- The Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP) website (www.centralalberta.ab.ca) has hundreds of links to information sources, and programs, including:
- Support for Training Workers
- Wage Subsidy Programs
- Recruiting Employees
- Employment Services in Central Alberta
- Foreign Worker Employer Guide

### Seminars and networking

**Employer Connections** are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. (across from the Provincial Building).

The meetings are an opportunity to meet job seekers, employment agencies and career counsellors.

Each week a single employer is showcased and presents their perspective.

To participate free of charge call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

### Labour solutions

- Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services.
  Ph. 403-358-7734
- Career Assistance Network (www.rdcan.ca) teams unemployed workers with employers.
  Ph. 403-341-7811
- Employment Placement Support Services supports adults over 25, and persons with disabilities age 18 and over.
  Ph. 403-343-6249
- Employment Access offers employment programs for clients with disabilities.
  Ph. 403-341-2363
- DRES provides support and assistance to employers hiring people with disabilities. Contact the Canada-Alberta Service Centre in Red Deer.
  Ph. 403-340-5353

### Personalized help when needed

There are dozens of programs available to employers. E&I employees will visit the workplace and provide a summary of options and opportunities.

For example, they can direct managers to initiatives that will help their business.

For more information call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

### Sign up free: We're live and online

In the News, an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures, and Finding Work In, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central.

A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

On the same web page there are Labour Market News products for Stettler, Wetaskiwin, Vermillion and Wainwright.

# JOB SEEKER Resources

There are many resources in the central region that can be helpful to job seekers and workers alike.

## Where to find us

In the News, an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures, and Finding Work In, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central.

A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

## Job search and career websites

- www.jobbank.gc.ca **(Job listings, links and other services)**
- www.alis.alberta.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.workopolis.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.monster.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.nextsteps.org **(Job resources for youth)**
- www.albertajobs.com **(Job listings)**
- www.hgcareers.com **(Job listings)**
- www.healthjobs.ab.ca **(Health care job listings)**

## Job search and career information by phone

Alberta Career Information Hotline:

1-800-661-3753

Fax: 780-422-0372 TDD: 780-422-5283

## Resumé review service

The Government of Alberta e-Resumé Review Service is a great way to have a resumé reviewed and improved, before sending it to employers.

To access the service, log on to www.alis.alberta.ca/hotline/resume and follow the instructions to send your resumé for review.

The service is free to residents of Alberta and those seeking work in Alberta.

## Resources for labour market information

These websites offer a wealth of labour market information on Alberta and specific communities.

- employment.alberta.ca/lmi **(Alberta Employment and Immigration)**
- www.alis.alberta.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.albertafirst.com **(Business and economic information)**
- www.centralalberta.ab.ca **(Central Alberta Economic Partnership)**
- www.alis.alberta.ca/employment/lmi/alberta.asp) **(Labour market information across Alberta)**
- www.labourmarketinformation.ca **(Service Canada)**

## Seminars and networking

**Employer Connections** are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. across from the Provincial Building.

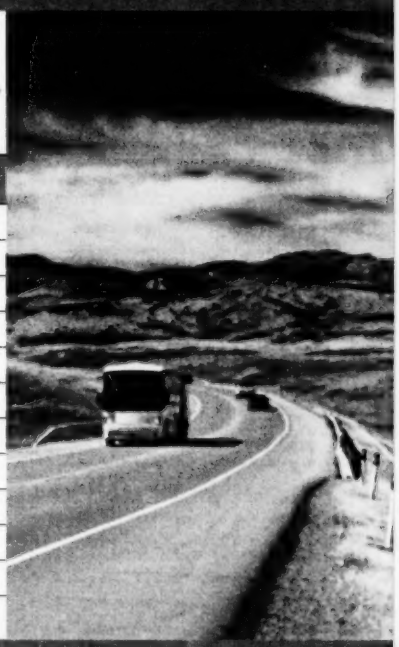
The meetings are an opportunity to meet employers face to face.

## New to Town?

Past issues of Labour Market News featured information for communities in Central Alberta.

See past bulletins for employment, social services, health care, transportation and other great resources available in your community.

| City / Town | Month |
|---|---|
| Camrose | July 2007 |
| Didsbury | October 2007 |
| Drayton Valley | June 2007 |
| Innisfail | September 2007 |
| Lacombe | August 2007 |
| Olds | February 2007 |
| Ponoka | November 2007 |
| Red Deer | January 2007 |
| Rocky Mountain House | April 2007 |
| Stettler | March 2007 |
| Sylvan Lake | December 2007 |
| Wetaskiwin | May 2007 |



## LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION CENTRES

Labour Market Information Centres (LMICs) provide information to help you make career, learning and work decisions. LMICs have books, magazines, newspapers, software and videos about employment-related topics.

There are LMICs across Alberta. For a complete list, see: employment.alberta.ca/lmic.

### LMICs in Central Alberta:

**Camrose Alberta Service Centre**
3rd Flr., Gemini Centre, 6708 - 48 Ave.
Ph. 780-608-2525

**Drayton Valley Sub-Office**
2nd Floor Provincial Building
5136 - 51 Ave. Ph. 780-542-3134

**Olds Alberta Service Centre**
4905 - 50 Ave. Ph. 403-507-8060

**Red Deer Canada-Alberta Service Centre**
2nd Floor First Red Deer Place, 4911 - 51 St.
Ph. 403-340-5353

**Rocky Mountain House Alberta Service Centre**, 4919 - 51 St. Ph. 403-845-8590

**Stettler Alberta Service Centre**
4835 - 50 St. Ph. 403-742-7586

**Wetaskiwin Alberta Service Centre**
1st Floor Macadil Building
5201 - 51 Ave. Ph. 780-361-1272

**Lloydminster LMIC**
5016 - 48 St. Ph. 780-871-6445

**Wainwright LMIC**
810 - 14 Ave. Ph. 780-842-7500

**Vermilion LMIC**
4701 - 52 St. Ph. 780-853-8164